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LETTER DATED 30 DECEMBER 1998 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF AUSTRIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to draw your attention to the statement of the Presidency of the European Union regarding the situation in Cyprus issued on 30 December 1998.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the statement circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Hans Peter MANZ
Deputy Permanent Representative of Austria
to the United Nations

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Annex

Statement of the Presidency of the European Union regarding the situation in Cyprus issued on 30 December 1998

The European Union welcomes the decision taken by Cypriot President Glafkos Clerides on 29 December 1998 not to bring S-300 missiles to the island. This decision has eliminated a source of tension on the island and should encourage progress towards a just and lasting settlement of the Cyprus conflict. It should be followed by gestures from Turkish side also.

The European Union considers the decision of President Clerides to be an important signal for the reduction of the excessively high level of armaments in Cyprus and hopes that further steps in this direction will be taken by both sides.

The European Union strongly endorses Security Council resolutions 1217 (1998) and 1218 (1998) adopted by the Council on 22 December 1998, and fully supports the ongoing efforts of the Secretary-General's Deputy Special Representative for Cyprus.

The European Union is of the view that President Clerides' decision also constitutes a positive development in the perspective of Cyprus' European Union accession. It shows that the increasingly strong ties between Cyprus and the European Union can contribute to the reduction of tensions and to the search for a political solution. The European Union will continue to work in accordance with the conclusions of the European Council of Luxembourg for the involvement of representatives of the Turkish-Cypriot community in the European Union accession negotiations.

The European Union calls on all parties to continue to cooperate with the Secretary-General of the United Nations with a view to reaching a comprehensive and lasting settlement on Cyprus in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council.